

# The News Wrap

*First course, First grading period, Week 7*

By learning to produce news wraps, students will begin the basics of simple radio production that ultimately will lead to the ability to produce radio pieces.



## Enduring Understanding

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All radio newscasts rely on readers (copy only) and short news wraps (news copy plus tape).



## Essential Question

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What is a news wrap and how do you produce it?



## Objectives and Outcome

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The student will be able to produce a news wrap that involves one piece of tape, copy, and an intro for the news anchor to read.



## Suggested Time

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Five days



## Resources and Materials

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Tape of news wraps and typed transcripts of them.

Pre-recorded 10 minutes of a press conference loaded into the classroom audio workstations.

An administrator willing to be interviewed by students about an issue or school-related topics of interest to students.

“Intelligibility in the writing,” Radio Production, pages 64-66

“Radio News Operations,” Announcing, pages 174-181



## Procedure

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The elements in this lesson are organized in five steps that may be equivalent to five class periods:

- Introducing the news wrap — News with tape (actuality)
- Identifying good tape
- Writing around your tape
- Finding a news wrap to do in school
- Perfecting the news wrap

### **Introducing the news wrap**

1. Play several news wraps and discuss how they are organized. Have the class discuss these questions:

- What role does the tape play in the spot?
- Why is the addition of the tape (an actuality) preferable to a reader?
- How long is the tape?
- Does it stand alone or sound too short?
- What is the point the tape is making clear?
- What is the focus of this wrap?
- How does the copy enhance the tape and add more information to it?
- How does the intro set up what you will hear from the reporter and the tape clip?

### **Identifying good tape to use in the news wrap**

2. In class begin listening to the press conference loaded into the workstations. Every time there is a cut that stands alone clearly, that makes a major point, that moves the press conference along stop, isolate that tape, and copy it onto another track of the audio workstation. Pull two or three cuts. Analyze the information between these cuts and discuss why the information communication is better communicated (in writing) by the reporter. Is it information needed in the news spot but not said as succinctly or well in the press conference? If so, it is good fodder for copy the reporter will write.

3. Have students pull several more cuts from the press conference. Set a limit on the number; they should not pull everything they hear. Example: For five minutes of press conference, pull two clips, each approximately 30 seconds in length. Have students explain why they made their choices. If there is time, look at transcripts of professional news wraps and begin to discuss the kinds of information that the reporters wrote “around the tape.”

### **Writing around your tape**

4. Using the isolated tape from yesterday’s class lesson on the press conference, have students write their wraps. This includes an intro for the anchor and the copy they will read as the news reporter into and out of the tape.

The copy that students write should be one seamless flow into and out of the tape. (Mastering this flow takes lots of practice.) Look at this seamless flow from writing to tape using transcripts of wraps in class. Discuss intros and what information they should contain to set up the story.

Students start writing. A student’s final words in a news wrap (the tag line/sock) should be “ I’m (student’s name) in (your city).” No wrap should be more than two minutes in total time from intro to tag line/sock.

5. Once the copy is edited by the teacher and rewritten by students, have students record their own copy. If students have individual audio files, have each one load it into a workstation in the same file as the press conference.

If the class does not finish the day's exercise in one period, it can be continued the next day. Remember, that during any "wait periods" for workstation time, students can be reading/listening to the news and preparing for a current events quiz, practicing enunciation drills and using the recorders.

### **Finding a news wrap to do in school**

6. In class, students record the administrator who comes in for 20 minutes to discuss an issue in the school or topics of interest to students. Examples of topics: Test scores, safety concerns, lunch lines or menu. Ideas and a guest can also be generated through the high school newspaper. Note to the teacher: Set this up ahead of time. Although it may be interesting to discuss the comments, do not linger too long. In the interest of time, students need to get the tape and get going on the choice of what they will isolate and write around as soon as possible.

7. Students begin to isolate tape cuts and write the wraps.

### **Perfecting the news wrap**

8. Students complete their press conference/administrator interview news wrap of the week with an edit. If there is time, teachers may comment on the news wrap and allow students to rewrite and record their new scripts for a mix of their wraps.

In the following weeks, whenever there is down time, students can produce more wraps. Keep it steady, keep it up. Practice as often as possible.



## **Homework**

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At the end of the first day, students record and listen to three news wraps on the air – give them local stations to monitor at the top of the hour and have them answer the questions above about the wraps they have heard. Most students probably can record a newscast at home to do this assignment. (Audio quality does not matter. They just need to listen again to the tapes to analyze them fully). If this is not possible, give students CDs of old news wraps to use for this exercise.

Listening to advanced news wraps produced by professional newscasters is the best plan. Use NPR, local public stations, or other stations' Web sites to get the material you need. Students can do this also.

Read textbook pages that deal with news.

At the end of the second section, students write down plans for three news stories they could do in their schools or communities. Have students use the form, "Creating a News Wrap" for each news wrap to complete this assignment.

Who would they interview and what would they ask? Examples can be hypothetical. They might include:

- The football game was rained out. Determine the focus of the news wrap: How did the rain affect the grass? What is the condition of the field for the next game? Does the coach think this will affect the team's momentum?
- A storm caused tree damage. Focus of wrap: What damage did it do? Question to power company executive: Describe the damage.

At the end of the third section of the lesson, students continue to work on the in-class assignment at home. They can take the tape cut home on CDs they burned from workstations if necessary.

By the end of the fourth section of the lesson, students can be working on their copy that wraps the actualities.



## Assessment

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Evaluate the finished news wrap on selection of actualities, quality of writing and flow of narrative. Also, give a technical grade for mastering specific editing skills.



## Academic Content Standards

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Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes. (Standard 5, NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts)

Write summaries of literary or expository passages that

- group related ideas and place them in logical order,
- contain main ideas and significant details of the passage, and
- reflect the underlying meaning of the source.

(DCPS English Language Arts, 7.W.2)

Revise writing to improve the topic/idea development, organization, language/style, word choice, and the tone in light of the audience, purpose and formality of the context (DCPS English Language Arts, 9.W.5)

Create coherent media presentations that synthesize information from several sources. (11.M.4)



## Industry Standards and Expectations

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Electronic journalists are committed to providing accurate and credible news stories. That commitment includes appropriate identification of materials used in news stories. Credibility is the stock in trade of RTNDA's members. If viewers and listeners cannot trust the stories presented on radio and television, they will tune out — literally. (“Comments of the Radio-Television News Directors Association Before the Federal Communications Commission”)

Demonstrate how to cultivate sources for stories. (Performance Element, Pathway KS Statement: Demonstrate writing processes used for various journalism media. States' Career Clusters, National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium)

Examine equipment and its function. [Operate audio recording and editing equipment] (Performance Element, Pathway KS Statement: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of technical support related to broadcasting, States' Career Clusters, National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium)

# Creating a News Wrap

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date     /     /

Subject of news wrap: \_\_\_\_\_

Focus of news wrap: \_\_\_\_\_

Who would you interview and why: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Questions to ask to get tape: \_\_\_\_\_

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Other information you need to know to write copy in the news wrap and in the intro: \_\_\_\_\_

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